

***SCHIP TO COVER 5 MILLION ADDITIONAL CHILDREN***

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(WASHINGTON, DC) -- Congressman Russ Carnahan (MO-3) voted in support of H.R. 3162, the Children's Health and Medicare Protection Act of 2007 (CHAMP Act), which passed the full House today.

The CHAMP Act reauthorizes and improves SCHIP, providing health care to 11 million kids, five million who currently lack health insurance and six million who are currently covered by SCHIP. These children are from working families with parents who either can't afford health insurance or hold jobs that lack health care benefits.

**"Insuring every American child is an achievable and affordable goal, and the CHAMP Act takes aggressive steps to meet this goal," Carnahan said.**

Both the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) and Medicare were threatened, requiring Congressional intervention. Funding for SCHIP expires September 30, and had the CHAMP Act not been passed, six million children would have lost access to quality, affordable insurance. Similarly, Medicare's premiums were estimated to rise more rapidly, and Medicare's Trust Fund would have become insolvent 2 years earlier than expected.

This legislation reverses the movement to privatize Medicare by equalizing payments between traditional Medicare and overpaid private plans. In addition, the CHAMP Act strengthens Medicare to ensure beneficiaries' access to their doctors by stopping a scheduled 10 percent payment cut to doctors and protects access to health care in rural communities.